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Transition to Organisation 5.0 - Barriers and Enablers of AI Adoption in Accounting and Finance

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Background & Motivation

1

AI adoption in accounting and finance lags behind other business functions (Eurostat 2025).

2

AI's Potential benefits: improve efficiency & security

Potential challenges: cost, compability, data privacy (Kou, G. & Lu, Y., 2025).

3

Need for human-centric digital transformation rather than cost savings and efficiency (Jackson, D., Allen, C., 2024).

-> Organization 5.0.

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Research Questions

RQ1. *What are the main barriers finance and accounting organisations face in the deployment of AI and other emerging technologies?*

RQ2. *To what extent do Organisation 5.0 elements support finance and accounting organisations in preparing for these challenges?*

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Theoretical Framework: Organisation 5.0 (Korte, P., Kobert, M., Süße, T., 2024)

- Origin: Industry 5.0 paradigm (European Union 2022)
- Key pillars:
  - Green orientation
  - Resilience
  - Human-centricity

- Organisations that operate in alignment with the core pillars of Industry 5.0, i.e. green orientation, resilience, and human-centricity, can be characterised as Organisations 5.0

Theory: Barriers and enablers of AI implementation

- Barriers/challenges: ethical questions, objectivity, data privacy, transparency, accountability, reliability, missing skills. (for ex. Lehner et al. 2022, Kruse et al. 2019, Kellogg et al. 2020, Aldoseri et al. 2023)

- Enablers in other domains: transparency, explainability, collaboration with humans and AI, internal and external training, seamless user experience, collaboration and discussion forums, piloting, investments (for ex. Agostinho et al. 2023, Scharowski et al. 2023, Mazarakis et al. 2023, Leng et al. 2023, Kans & Campos 2024, Jackson & Allen 2024, Ångström et al. 2023)

Methodology

- Exploratory survey design
- Online survey (Webropol), March–April 2025
- Ranking approach for barriers and enablers
- Data analyzed by importance scores (Hauck, C.2024, Taherdoost, H., 2019)

18. Choose the five biggest challenges in AI adoption and rank them in order importance. 1 = most important, 5 = less important.

The company lacks the necessary expertise	Select
Compatibility issues with existing tools, programs, or systems	Select
Problems with the availability or quality of the required data	Select
Concerns about data privacy or security, as well as cybersecurity	Select
Uncertainty about legal issues, such as copyrights or AI legislation	Select
Costs seem too high	Select
The company does not benefit from AI technologies	Select
Ethical reasons	Select
Lack of change management	Select
Skills deterioration due to automation and fear of dependency on AI vendors/software	Select
Concerns about fairness, e.g., in algorithmic decision-making such as loan approvals	Select
Low transparency in the reasoning chain	Select
AI may work in testing but might not function in a real environment	Select

Survey question 1

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Creating an innovative and learning-oriented organizational culture	Select
Providing continuous and high-quality training, and developing skills	Select
Participating in projects and sharing knowledge and skills within them	Select
Engaging in various networks	Select
Through organizations, e.g., Financial Management Association, Financial Sector Central Federation, etc.	Select
Through online discussion platforms, e.g., software vendor community	Select
Contributing to open-source or content creation (such as open materials, blogs, etc.)	Select
Investing in the usability of information systems and seamless user experience	Select
Close collaboration between IT and financial management units	Select
Updating technology and tools, including investment strategy	Select
Familiarizing with work tasks and acquiring seamlessly fitting digital tools	Select
Testing new technologies	Select

Survey question 2: Enablers

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Descriptive statistics

Variable	Sample (N=103)	Percentage
Gender		
Female	74	71%
Male	28	28%
Prefer not to say	1	1%
Age		
Under 25	1	1%
25-34	19	18%
35-44	36	36%
45-54	30	29%
55-64	15	14%
Over 64	2	2%

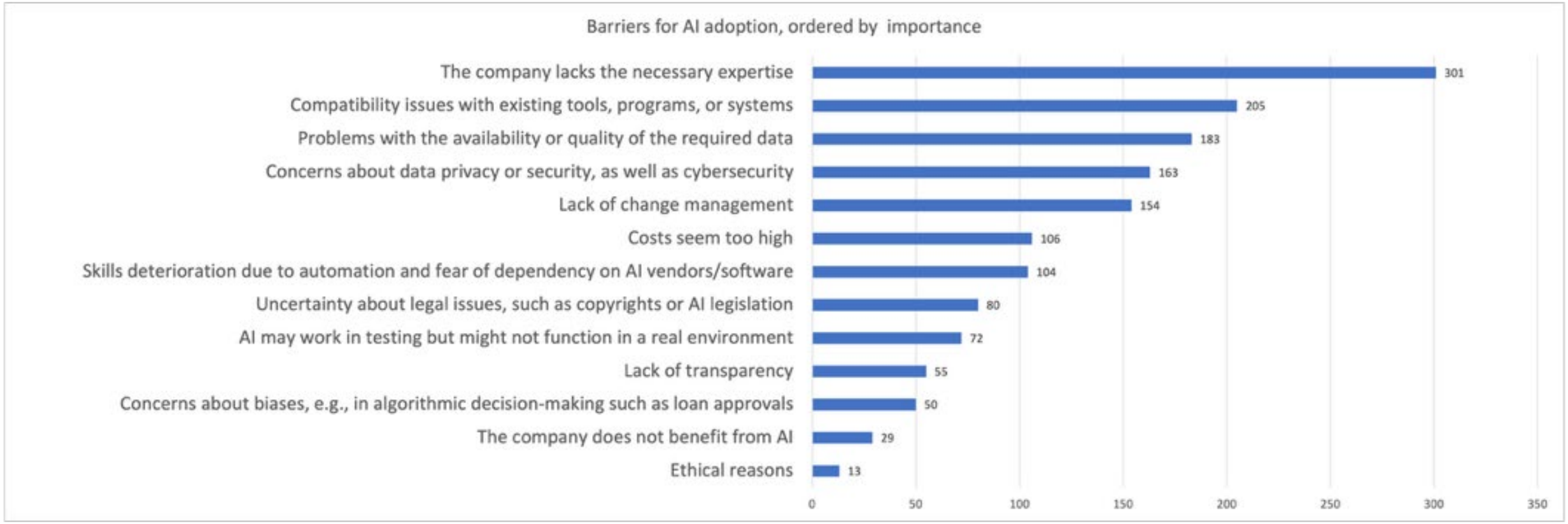
Descriptive statistics

Education		
Secondary school	21	20%
Bachelor's degree	53	52%
Master's degree or higher	29	28%
Work experience		
< 1 year	3	3%
1-3 years	4	4%
4-6 years	14	13%
7-10 years	13	13%
> 10 years	69	66%

Descriptive statistics

Variable	Sample (N=103)	Percentage
Employer		
Accounting service firm	41	40%
Accounting department of a firm	26	25%
Financial institution	16	15%
Public organisation	4	4%
Other	16	15%
Number of employees		
< 10	28	27%
10-49	9	9%
50-99	9	9%
> 100	57	55%

Results: RQ1 What are the main barriers to AI adoption in accounting and finance?



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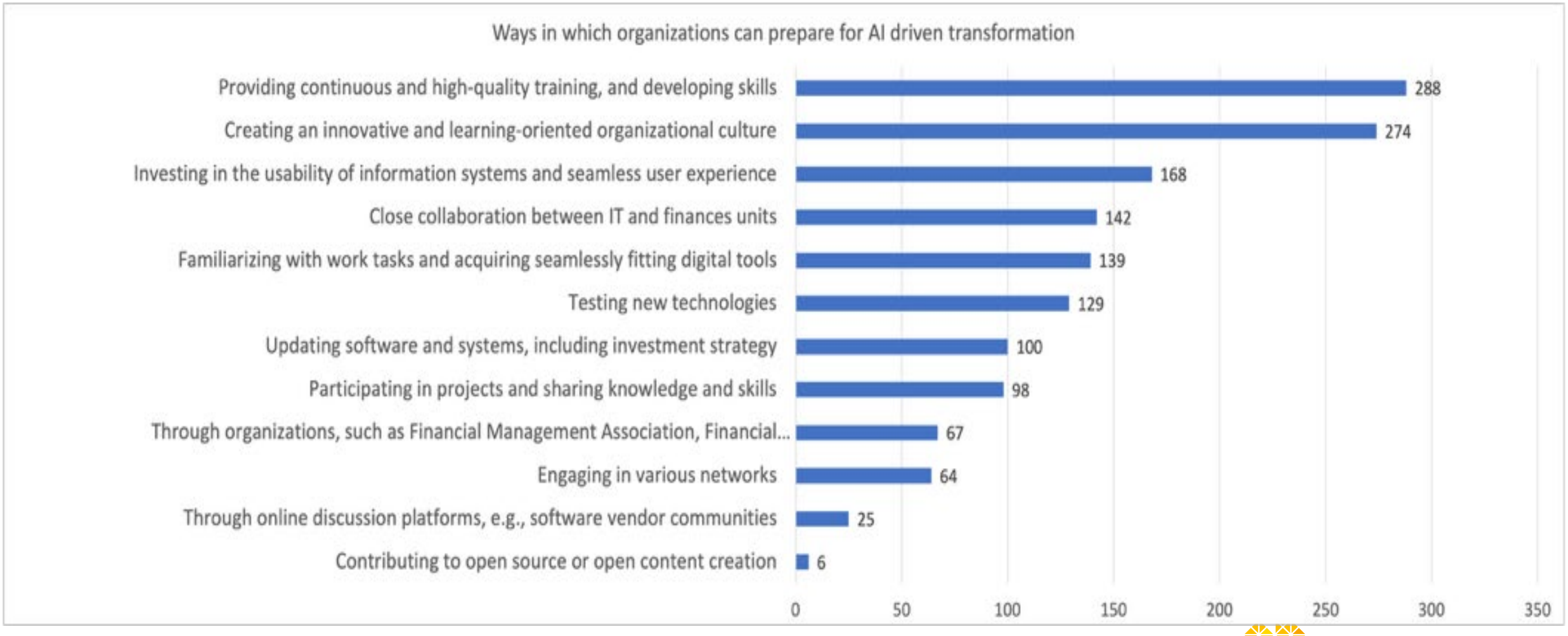
Results: RQ2 *To what extent do Organisation 5.0 elements support finance and accounting organisations in preparing for these challenges?*



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Discussion

- **Skills gap** dominates barriers → training as key enabler – align with previous studies
- **Ethical issues surprisingly low priority** – different to for ex Lehner et al. (2022), Kruse et al (2019) and Berube et al. (2021) – Reason? AI usage still at its early phases?
- **User experience emerges as critical factor** in accounting context different to accounting literature
-
- Organisation 5.0 principles of human centricity visible: education, culture, usability
- Generational differences: younger employees value experimentation

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Conclusions

AI adoption requires:

- **Competence development**
- **Learning-oriented organisational culture**
- **User-friendly systems**

Organisation 5.0 is materializing in practice

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Limitations & Future Work

Finland-only sample → limited generalizability

Small sample size, experienced professionals dominate

Question one barriers, might limit the answers to second question about enablers

Future research: cross-country studies.

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